

DEPARTMENT OF FAIR EMPLOYMENT & HOUSING

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**DFEH SETTLES RACIAL HARASSMENT CASE AGAINST THE CITY OF
SACRAMENTO; FORMER EMPLOYEE AWARDED \$150,000 IN DAMAGES**

Sacramento – The Department of Fair Employment and Housing (DFEH) today announced the settlement of an employment racial discrimination case brought against the City of Sacramento by a former employee.

The initial complaint was filed with DFEH by Raymond Garza, a Hispanic employee with the City, in March of 1999. After investigating the case, DFEH filed an Accusation before the Fair Employment and Housing Commission in March of 2000. The City then elected to have the matter adjudicated in the Sacramento County Superior Court and agreed to the settlement, without admitting any liability, in February of 2001. The City of Sacramento and its Workers' Compensation carrier have agreed to settle the case for \$150,000.

Raymond Garza was hired by the City of Sacramento as a Plant Operator in August of 1987. From September of 1996 through March of 1998, Mr. Garza was subjected to frequent derogatory racial comments by another employee, as were other employees of different ethnic backgrounds. In addition, Mr. Garza was also physically harassed. He notified his supervisor of the harassment in August and September of 1997. No action was taken. Mr. Garza again complained in April of 1998, as the harassment had escalated. He filed a complaint with DFEH in March of 1999. The complaint alleged that the City failed to take immediate and appropriate action, and failed to maintain a harassment policy that complied with the Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA).

According to DFEH Counsel Janie Hickok Siess, who finalized the settlement, the terms of the agreement require the City to implement a written policy against workplace discrimination on the basis of race. In addition, the City is required to conduct training for all staff members regarding employees' rights, obligations and remedies, as they relate to the prevention of workplace harassment on the basis of race.

"A settlement involving issues of this magnitude continues to showcase California as a leader in the area of civil rights enforcement," stated DFEH Director Dennis Hayashi. "This case points out that California laws protect our diverse population from racial employment discrimination, in both the public and private sectors."

For more information about rights and responsibilities under the FEHA, contact DFEH at (800) 884-1684, or visit the Department's website at: www.dfeh.gov

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